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ABSTRACT

These two newsletter issues of the National Transition Alliance (NTA) for Youth with Disabilities present articles concerning the transition of youth with disabilities from school-to-work (STW) and related informational items. The first issue contains the following articles: "Bringing a Complicated System into Harmony" (focus on the School to Work Opportunities Act); "Knowledge, Production, and Synthesis" (a discussion of the NTA's efforts to identify effective STW activities); "The NTA Framework for Examining School-to-Work Practices" (the five-element model used by the NTA); "Customized, Data-Driven Technical Assistance"; and "Information Dissemination and Utilization." Also included are brief descriptions of the six organizations comprising the Alliance and a listing of resources including publications, organizations, and Web sites. The second issue contains the following articles: "Employing Partnerships in the School to Work Transition of Youth with Disabilities" (specific suggestions for recruiting employers); "Business and Community Resources"; "School to Work Opportunities Act"; "STW: A View from the States" (summaries of STW efforts in Vermont and Colorado); and "Student-Focused Planning and Development" (emphasis on practices toward this end). Also included are a list of conferences, names of the editorial advisory committee members, and snapshots from the organization's annual meeting. (DB)

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ED 461 204

Bringing a Complicated System into Harmony [and] Employer Partnerships in the School to Work Transition of Youth with Disabilities

Therese Divita, Editor

Alliance: Newsletter of the National Transition Alliance
v1 n1-2 Sep, Jun 1996

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NATIONAL TRANSITION ALLIANCE
FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

ALLIANCE

The Newsletter of the National Transition Alliance

VOLUME 1
NUMBER 1
June, 1996

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The Alliance

A product of the National Transition Alliance for Youth with Disabilities, (Cooperative Agreement Number HH8SM50001) funded by the U.S. Department Of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Office of Special Education Programs, and the U.S. Department of Labor.

Produced for the NTA by The Academy for Educational Development

Bringing a Complicated System into Harmony

Preparing all youth to become fully participating and contributing members of their communities presents a significant challenge to schools, communities, and states. The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world that has no formal school-to-work transition system. In fact, we can best characterize our nation's programs as a mosaic of programs designed to help students make the connection between school and work. Because we lack a unified school-to-work transition system, many of our nation's youth are unable to navigate successfully between their learning and work experiences. Successful school-to-work transition occurs when transitioning youth approach employment, postsecondary education, and independent living opportunities with competent skills and training needed to become lifelong learners.

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) of 1994, with Goals 2000: Educate America Act, establishes a broad national incentive for education reform. Together, these laws envision the development of state and local partnerships necessary to create a comprehensive and coherent system to help all youth acquire the knowledge, skills, abilities, and information to access employment or to further their education and training.

When President Clinton signed the Act into law in May 1994, he conveyed the spirit of the law as "the American dream of opportunity for all." The promise of the Act is to expand and enrich opportunities for all youth to select and succeed in workplace, education, and training experiences. The intent of the Act is consistent with the transition requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA.

However, the promise of including all students is still not enough to guarantee students with disabilities access to and participation in the programs that are evolving. States and local programs can benefit from assistance in developing and implementing school-to-work transition systems that meet the needs of **all** students, including students with a diverse range of abilities. The National Transition Alliance for Youth with Disabilities (NTA) is designed to identify proven practices, evaluate transition program effectiveness, provide technical assistance, and prepare and disseminate information. Charged with information dissemination within the Alliance, the Academy for Educational Development (AED) brings you this first introduction to the NTA, its mission, members, and activities.

HARMONY *Continued on page 4*

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NATIONAL TRANSITION ALLIANCE
FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

MEMBERS

The NTA WWW address is: http://www.aed.org/Transition/Alliance/NTA.html

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Peter J. Joyce, Vice President
email: joyccp@nab.com

Knowledge, Production, and Synthesis

The NTA believes that successful state and local school-to-work transition programs emerge from a strong foundation of research and best practices as well as through continuous program evaluation. Through the leadership of the Transition Research Institute at Illinois (TRI), the Alliance will engage in an ongoing search for models and programs that work. In addition, the Alliance will conduct program evaluation activities to broadly promote and disseminate these results about the effectiveness of emerging school-to-work activities to the nation.

Identifying Proven Practices and Information—a Framework for Examining School-to-Work Practices

The focus of these activities is to identify existing and emerging information about effective practices for school-to-work transition for youth with disabilities and, in concert with other NTA activities, to promote and disseminate these practices to emerging state and local school-to-work systems. Our immediate efforts are targeted towards identifying existing information about effective practices and programs and making these resources widely available. Over the next several years, the Alliance will focus on identifying emerging resources that add new knowledge about effective school-to-work programs and the application of these strategies for all youth.

Based on over ten years of research conducted by TRI, the NTA is developing a framework for examining effective school-to-work practices. The Institute's *Taxonomy for Transition Programming: Linking Research and Practice* (1996), developed by Dr. Paula Kohler, serves as the basis for this emerging framework. The NTA framework for examining school-to-work practices is featured on page 6.

Evaluating School-to-Work Opportunities Systems

The Alliance is working with the National School-to-Work Office to support ongoing program evaluation activities to determine the effectiveness of emerging school-to-work systems. Our goal is to facilitate state access to comprehensive and inclusive evaluation systems that also appropriately address broad issues related to the participation of youth with disabilities in School-to-Work Opportunities Systems.

Based on the proven program evaluation track record of TRI, Dr. Frank Rusch is leading the NTA's strategy for evaluating school-to-work program effectiveness. To date, the Alliance has reviewed the evaluation activities and status of 13 School-to-Work Opportunities Systems' grantees. The Alliance is collaborating with these states by reviewing their evaluation activities related to youth with disabilities. Our goal is to develop a compilation of the various performance, outcome, and evaluation measures of all states. This information will be shared with the states and used to further the Alliance's technical assistance and evaluation activities.

In addition to our direct work with the states, the Council of Chief State School Officers is updating their baseline survey data regarding participation of youth with disabilities in school-to-work systems. Dan Wiltrout, Senior Project Associate of the CCSSO's Resource Center on Educational Equity, will be investigating how best to use this information in the NTA's overall evaluation activities. This information will also be used to update the CCSSO's popular publication, "*Including Students with Disabilities in School-to-Work Opportunities*" (1995).

Collaboration

The key to any successful research, technical assistance, and dissemination effort is the collaboration of and input from critical stakeholders. The concept of an alliance is at the core of the NTA. All of our activities are designed to be responsive to the needs of and input from diverse target audiences. Look for the NTA's collaboration efforts with and feedback from diverse agencies, organizations, programs, and individuals throughout the NTA — our Advisory Committee and expert panels, conferences and meetings, topical conference calls, technical assistance, products and information services, and evaluation. We welcome your input and suggestions for strengthening the customer-driven activities of the NTA!

HARMONY *Continued from cover*

Influenced by the passage of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act and the transition requirements under IDEA, the NTA was jointly funded in October 1995 by the United States Departments of Education and Labor. This Alliance promotes the transition of youth with disabilities, including severe disabilities, toward desired post-school experiences, including gainful employment, postsecondary education and training, and independent living. The NTA brings together universities, nonprofit service and business organizations, and national education associations in support of personnel working with youth making the transition from school to adult life. Together Goals 2000, the STWOA, and IDEA envision structural school system reform, and set high academic and occupational standards. The power of our unified energies, within the NTA, keeps these standards in the forefront of our mission.

Although educational systems strive to encourage students to master a set of skills, ultimately their goal is to empower youth to take responsibility for their own future. This is an evolving process for all students, especially those with a range of abilities. It is our mission to bridge between agencies and personnel providing services for transitioning youth and the rich resources and experiences that have emerged within the disability field.

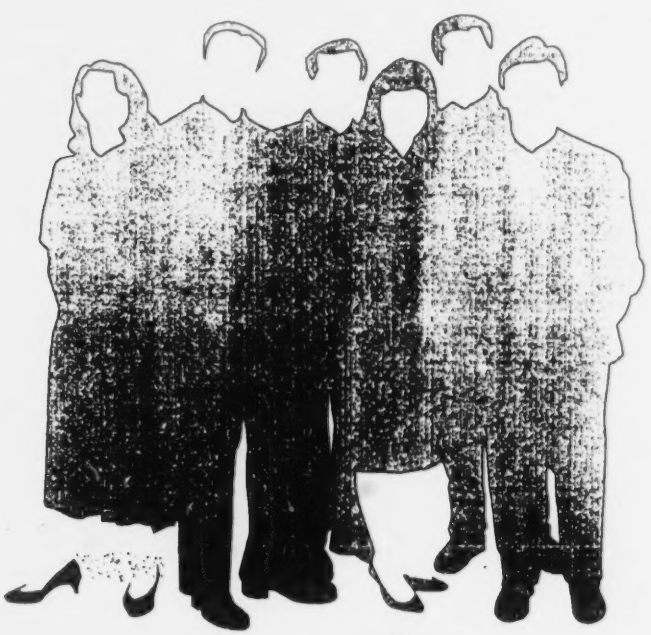
Linked together, it is our hope that the NTA's activities maximize opportunities for all youth in emerging school-to-work systems. Comprehensively, the NTA synthesizes knowledge gained through years of research, coordinates expertise in technical assistance, and shares this information with you, as we pilot our collaboration. It is our intent to connect you with more information, existing and emerging resources, and present a clear picture of this unified effort in support of transitioning youth, especially youth with disabilities, in school-to-work systems.

The National Alliance Project Officers are:

Dr. Michael Ward with the Office of Special Education Programs

Amy Bennett with the National School-to-Work Office

Dr. Thomas Finch with the Rehabilitation Services Administration



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The Players

Through partnerships, the NTA meets the ever changing needs of our youth with disabilities in transition from school-to-work and postsecondary education and independent living. Collectively, the Alliance is a partnership among universities, nonprofit service and business organizations, and national education associations. Our members include:

The Transition Research Institute at Illinois — Established in 1985, TRI identifies effective practices, conducts intervention and evaluation research, and provides technical assistance activities that promote the successful transition of youth with disabilities from school to adult life. TRI also serves as an information resource for teachers, service providers, and researchers statewide, nationally, and internationally. Tri-talk, established by the Institute, is an electronic discussion group on the Internet devoted to transition information exchange. TRI currently provides technical assistance and evaluation services to over 80 model demonstration and research projects currently funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

The National Transition Network — Located at the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota, the NTN was established in 1992 to provide technical assistance and evaluation services to states implementing statewide systems change projects on transition for youth with disabilities. Through its efforts, the NTN provides assistance to 35 statewide systems change projects currently funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

The Academy for Educational Development — Founded in 1961, AED is an independent, nonprofit service organization committed to addressing human development needs in the United States and throughout the world. In partnership with its clients, the Academy seeks to meet today's social, economic, and environmental challenges through education and human resource development; to apply state-of-the-art education, training, technical assistance, research, technology, management, and behavioral analysis, and social marketing techniques to solve problems; and to improve knowledge and skills throughout the world as the most effective means for stimulating growth, reducing poverty, and promoting democratic and humanitarian ideas.

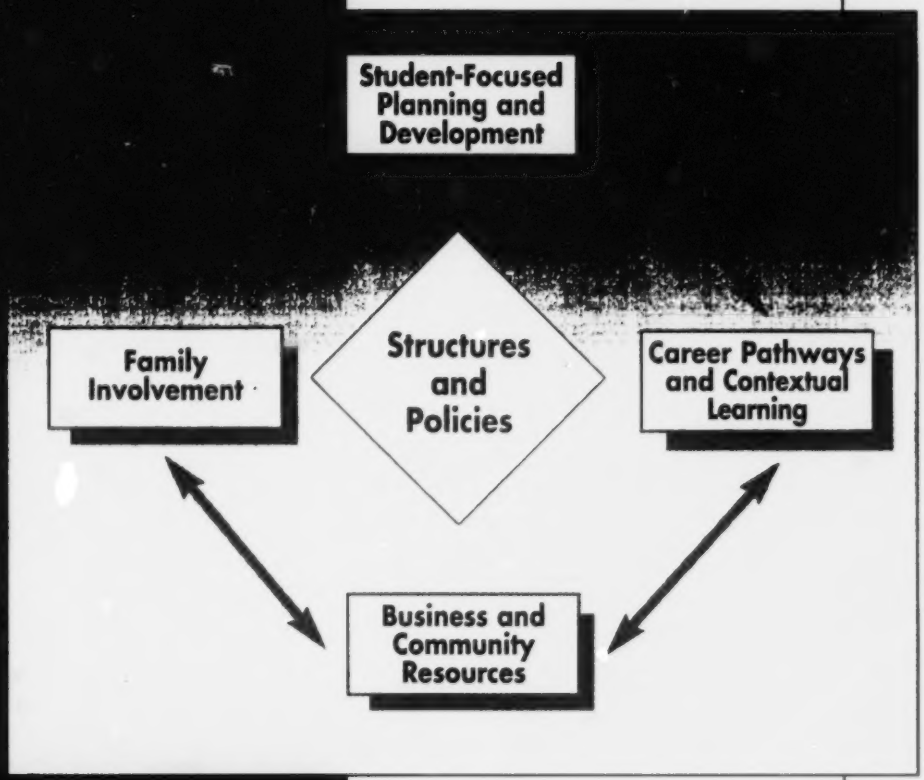
The Council of Chief State School Officers — An independent council since 1927, CCSSO comprises public officials who lead departments responsible for elementary and secondary education in the states, U.S. extra-state jurisdictions, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Schools. CCSSO seeks its members' consensus on major education issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, to Congress, and to the public. The CCSSO Resource Center on Educational Equity is responsible for managing and staffing a variety of CCSSO leadership initiatives working to assure education success for all children and youth, especially those placed at risk of school failure.

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education — A nonprofit organization, founded in 1939, NASDSE's primary purpose is to promote and support special education programs in the United States and outlying areas. NASDSE provides services to state agencies to facilitate their efforts in maximizing educational outcomes for individuals with disabilities. NASDSE provides technical assistance to state education agencies particularly in collaboration with a variety of educational and human service organizations.

The National Alliance of Business — A business-led nonprofit organization, founded in 1968, NAB is dedicated to building a quality workforce that meets the needs of employers. NAB works with the nation's business leaders as they take an active role in building an internationally competitive workforce through education reform and enhanced job training. NAB directs programs, creates public awareness, shapes public policy, and builds coalitions and partnerships.

The NTA Framework for Examining School-to-Work Practices

This framework is in its early design stage; however, it provides a brief glimpse of what you might expect to see in the near future.



The framework features five broad categories of practices. Collaboration, in its many and varied forms, serves as an important connection within and among each of these categories. The categories include:

Structures and Policies represents program practices and characteristics that relate to the effective and efficient delivery of school-to-work transition services.

Student-Focused Planning and Development includes practices that focus on planning and developing educational programs for individual students.

Career Pathways and Contextual Learning features school-based and work-based curricula and activities that relate to career exploration and development.

Family Involvement highlights practices that revolve around parent and family involvement in planning and delivering education and transition services, and facilitating such involvement.

Business and Community Resources includes practices that facilitate participation by business, labor unions, community service agencies, youth development organizations, government agencies, and other community resources in all aspects of school-to-work systems.

The activities for identifying effective school-to-work practices are being enhanced by a panel of experts who will validate and expand the framework. The NTA is casting a wide net to identify models through database searches, reviews of existing literature, networking, and individual solicitation. To date, we have identified over 140 programs. Information about these programs is being compiled into "user-friendly" formats to facilitate synthesis and dissemination. If you have an effective model program that you'd like us to include in our analysis, please contact Dr. Paula Kohler, at the Transition Research Institute.

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Customized, Data-Driven Technical Assistance

The NTA promotes networking and information sharing surrounding technical assistance activities. The Alliance coordinates technical assistance in two areas: to School-to-Work Opportunities in Development and Implementation States and to the model projects funded by the Office of Special and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).

Currently, technical assistance to Development and Implementation States is led by staff at one of our partnering organizations, the National Transition Network (NTN). The major goal is to ensure that these states have access to a comprehensive range of consultation, technical assistance, information, and opportunities to network and share information concerning their projects with other School-to-Work initiatives within states. In addition to conducting needs assessments in states, NTN coordinates efforts with other technical assistance providers including the Regional Resource and Federal Centers for Special Education, State Systems Change Grantees, and the National School-to-Work Office.

Regular communication with contact people in school-to-work systems is established so that needs assessments can be made and technical assistance plans developed. Action plans to identify strategies for including youth with disabilities in emerging school-to-work programs and services are developed through this regular communication. Also, state and local team partnership building workshops are conducted. Further coordination of technical assistance and planning with National School-to-Work Office, Rehabilitative Services Administration, and the Office of Special Education Programs guides future collaborative activities.

Another Alliance Partner, the Transition Research Institute (TRI) supports technical assistance to over 80 OSERS-funded transition model demonstration projects that is focused on strengthening program evaluation. The Transition Research Institute reports that the goal of evaluation technical assistance involves such areas as evaluation design, management, instrumentation, data collection methods, data analysis evaluation, utilization, and dissemination.

Our unified efforts within the Alliance will capitalize on the benefits of networking and information sharing among our partners and other national organizations providing technical assistance. The NTA sponsors annual conferences and forums to facilitate idea exchanges and encourages organizations to work together to share experiences and identify strategies for coordination and collaboration. Coordinated activities are planned with the Academy for Educational Development (AED), Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the National Alliance of Business (NAB), and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE).

DATA *Continued on page 8*

Major Technical Assistance Activities include:

- Coordinating technical assistance and planning across National School-to-Work Office, Rehabilitative Services Administration, Office of Special Education Programs, State Systems Change Grantees, and Regional Resource, and Federal Centers
- Conducting needs assessments and developing formal technical assistance plans
- Providing technical assistance to school-to-work development and implementation grantees
- Promoting successful state and local school-to-work activities and linking to comprehensive state systems change activities
- Evaluating the impact of technical assistance

DATA Continued from page 7

Many different questions are asked by personnel working with youth in school-to-work systems.

Here are some examples of what states are asking from technical assistance providers:

How do we access assistance on our state team regarding issues surrounding partners at the regional and local level?

Can you help prepare briefing materials and resource listings to define and assess the quality of work-based learning activities for students?

Will you assist in facilitating a meeting of key stakeholders to develop a vision for STW in our state?

How can we find out about the implications of federal block grants on STW systems and career and technology education?

We need in-service training for our vocational district, student services, and curriculum directors. Can you help?

How can we develop our own occupational skills standards and use the curriculum framework and performance standards?

How can we build our local partnerships?

Can you help us design strategies to continue project activities after the funding ends?

What are some effective strategies to include students with disabilities in school-to-work activities?

What are strategies involving employers as partners?

The NTA promotes successful strategies!

Networking at annual conferences, workshops, forums

Electronic Information Exchanges linking useful databases among the Alliance and the school-to-work home pages

On-site visits

Topical teleconferences with outside consultants and experts

Regional, state and multi-state meetings and conferences

Paper and electronic mail dissemination

Regularly scheduled technical assistance calls

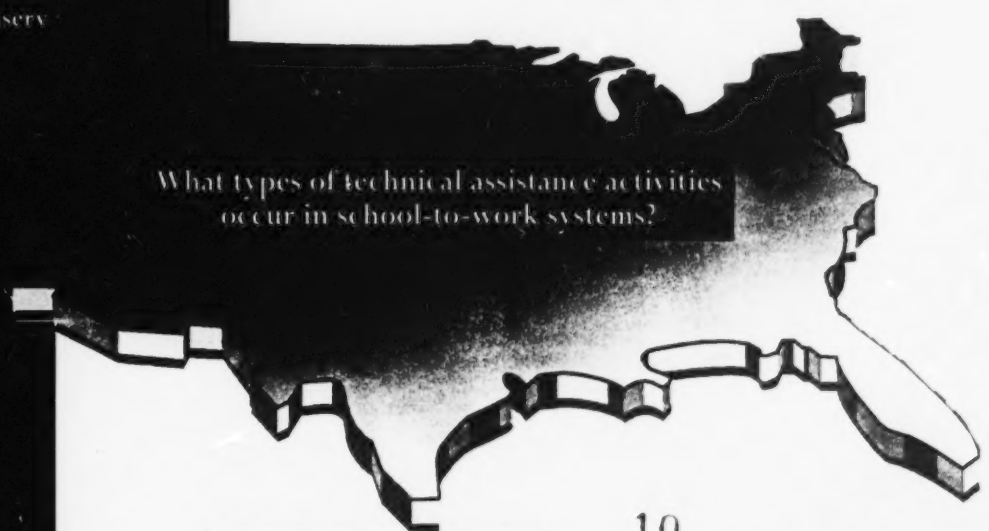
Regular contact/collaboration with state transition systems change personnel

Materials development and dissemination

Annual project directors meeting

Tri-talk listserv

What types of technical assistance activities occur in school-to-work systems?



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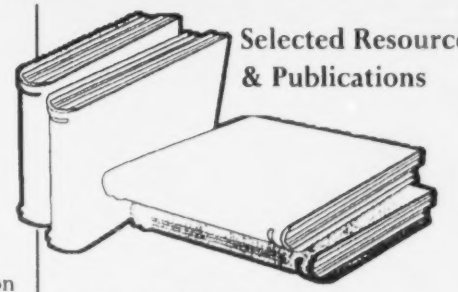
Information Dissemination and Utilization

One of the primary goals of the NTA is to connect usable and useful information to the people who need it. Through the Academy for Educational Development (AED) the Alliance engages in a range of activities to prepare information on how best to fulfill the secondary education needs of youth, and establishes linkages to universally available communication systems that promote dissemination of such information. The NTA plans to promote the availability and use of information through its annual Project Directors Meeting and a national forum in 1997. You might also see the NTA display at national, state, and local meetings and conferences throughout the year. We hope that you will take advantage of our materials and resources.

As you will find in our publications section below, the NTA is identifying relevant resources and materials, building an electronic information exchange network, and developing publications for broad dissemination. We expect that these activities will provide high quality and relevant technical assistance to promote practices which enhance the participation of youth with disabilities in school-to-work systems.

If you have resources or products to share, ideas about topics and issues to include in our publications, or would just like to make suggestions that will assist us in making our products more "user-friendly," please contact Dr. Richard Horne at the Academy for Educational Development.



Selected Resources & Publications

Dais, T.A., & Kohler, P.D. (1995).
Review of transition-related assessment instruments.
Champaign-Urbana, IL:
Transition Research Institute at Illinois

Harmon, A.S., Wallace, B.F., Grayson, T.E., & Leach, L.N. (1995).
Compendium of transition model demonstration programs, 1995.
Champaign-Urbana, IL:
Transition Research Institute at Illinois

Hicks, J. (1995).
The School-to-Work Opportunities Act: An analysis of selected states' initial efforts.
Alexandria, VA:
National Association of State Directors of Special Education

Kohler, P.D. (1996).
Taxonomy for transition programming: Linking research and practice.
Champaign-Urbana, IL:
Transition Research Institute at Illinois

McGahee-Kovac, M. (1995).
A student's guide to the I.E.P.
Washington, D.C.:
National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (Additional materials in this series include a Technical Assistance Guide and a complete audiotape program available from NICHCY, 1-800-695-0285)

National Institute for Work and Learning. (1995-1996).
Education reform and school-to-work transition series.
Washington, D.C.: Academy for Educational Development
(This series includes eight topics.)

National Transition Network.
Policy Update and *Parent Brief.*
Minneapolis, MN:
Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota
(Various titles are included in this series of publications.)

Norman, M.E., & Bourexis, P.S. (1995).
Including students with disabilities in school-to-work opportunities.
Washington, D.C.: Council of Chief State School Officers

Partee, G. (1995).
Ensuring all students access to school-to-work opportunity systems in the states.
Washington, D.C.: Council of Chief State School Officers

Poston, H.K., & Pincus, A.L. (Eds.)
WorkAmerica. The newsletter of the National Alliance of Business.
Washington, D.C.: National Alliance of Business

Storms, J., DeStafano, L., & O'Leary, E. (1996).
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Transition requirements.
Eugene, OR: Western Regional Resource Center
(Available from the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials, 1-800-223-5219)

The NTA's Electronic Information Exchange Network, or EIEN, is evolving to promote widespread use and exchange of information. This network includes the NTA's site on the World Wide Web, our databases, and user information services. Look for us at

http://www.aed.org/Transition/Alliance/NTA.html

Conferences:

July 18-21 National Training Seminar (Nashville, Tennessee) Sponsored by Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc. Contact Adrienne Smith at (703) 684-9479

September 21-23 Tech Prep, School-to-Work: It's Working! Maintaining Momentum Conference (San Antonio, Texas) Sponsored by the National Tech Prep Network. Call (800) 972-2766

October 5-8 Annual Workforce Conference 1996, Sponsored by National Alliance of Business (Los Angeles, California) Call (800) 787-2881

October 10-12, CCSSO Schools-to-Careers Conference State Urban Leadership Teams, San Diego, California Call (202) 336-7057

November 21-23, 22nd Annual TASH Conference "Renewing the Promise", Over 60 sessions on Transition and Employment! Call Rose Holsey at TASH (410) 828-8274 x 1000

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The Transition Research Institute at Illinois has established "tri-talk", a listserv on the Internet. Tri-talk facilitates communication and information sharing among Institutes' staff, transition project directors, practitioners, researchers, parents, and anyone else interested in transitioning youth with disabilities from school-to-work.

To subscribe to "tri-talk" send e-mail to Lynda Leach: leachlyn@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu or call Lynda @ The Transition Research Institute (217) 333-2325

Selected National Resources

Clearinghouses and Information Centers

ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education (ERIC EC)
The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589
(800) 328-0272 v (703) 264-9449 tty
(703) 264-9494 fax (703) 487-9432 v
Internet: ericec@inet.ed.gov

ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education
The Ohio State University
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, Ohio 43210-1090
(614) 292-4353 v (800) 848-4815 v (614) 292-1260 fax
Internet: ericave@magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu

HEATH Resource Center National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities
One Dupont Circle, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036-1193
(800) 544-3284 v (202) 939-9320 v/tty (202) 833-4760 fax
Internet: HEATH@ACE.NCHE.EDU

National Information Center on Deafness (NICD)
Gallaudet University
800 Florida Avenue NE
Washington, DC 20002-3695
(202) 651-5051 v (202) 651-5052 tty (202) 651-5054 fax
Internet: nicd@gallau.gallaudet.edu

National School-to-Work Learning & Information Center
400 Virginia Avenue, SW, Room 210
Washington, DC, 20024
(800) 251-7236 fax: (202) 401-6211
E-mail: stw-lc@ed.gov Internet: HTTP://www.stw.ed.gov

National Information Clearinghouse on Children who are Deaf-Blind
(DB-LINK)
345 N. Monmouth Avenue
Monmouth, OR 97361
(800) 438-9376 v (800) 854-7013 tty (503) 838-8150 fax
Internet: lesliegl@ra.wosc.osshe.edu

National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials
Oklahoma State University
816 6th Street
Stillwater, OK 74078-4080
(405) 624-7650 (800) 223-5219 Fax: (405) 624-0695
www.nchrtm.okstate.edu

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)
PO Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013
(800) 695-0285 v/tty (202) 884-8200 v (202) 884-8441 fax
Internet: nichcy@aed.org

National Rehabilitative Information Center (NARIC)
8455 Colesville Road, Suite 935
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3319
(800) 227-0216 v (301) 588-9284 v (301) 587-1969 fax
Internet: http://www.naric.com/naric

National Organizations

American Vocational Association (AVA)
1410 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(800) 826-9972 v (703) 683-3111 v

Center on Education and Work
University of Wisconsin
964 Educational Sciences Building
1025 West Johnson Street, Madison, WI 53706-1796
(800) 446-0399
Internet: http://www.cew.wisc.edu

Center on Education and Training forEmployment
The Ohio State University
1900 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1090
(614) 292-4353 v

National Association of Developmental Disabilities Councils (NADDC)
1234 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 103
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 347-1234 v

National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE)
2150 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 1250
Berkeley, CA 94720-1674
(800) 762-4093 v (510) 642-4004 v

Council for Exceptional Children
Division on Career Development and Transition
1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589
(703) 620-3660 v

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Regional Disability and Business Accommodation Centers
(800) 949-4232 v/tty
This 800 number will automatically connect you to the regional office for your state.

National Council on Disability (NCD)
1331 F Street NW, Suite 1050, Washington, DC 20004
(202) 272-2004 v

National Council on Independent Living (NCIL)
2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 405, Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 525-3406 v (703) 525-3407 tty

Technical Assistance to Parent Programs Network (TAPP)
Federation for Children with Special Needs
95 Berkeley Street, Suite 104, Boston, MA 02116
(800) 331-0688 (in MA) v (617) 482-2915 v

World Institute on Disability (WID)
510 16th Street, Suite 100, Oakland, CA 94612-1502
(510) 763-4100 v (510) 208-9493 tty (510) 763-4109 fax

Alliance for Technology Access (ATA)
2175 East Francisco Boulevard, Suite L, San Rafael, CA 94901
(415) 455-4575 v

Trace Research and Development Center
S-151 Waisman Center
1500 Highland Avenue, Madison, WI 53706
(608) 262-6966 v (608) 263-5408 tty

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS)
Library of Congress
Washington, DC 20542
(202) 707-5100 v (202) 707-0744 tty

Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB)
The Anne T. MacDonald Center
20 Roszel Road, Princeton, NJ 08540
(800) 221-4792 v (609) 452-0606 v

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Selected Web Sites

The NTA Partners on the World Wide Web:

National Transition Alliance for Youth with Disabilities:
http://www.aed.org/Transition/Alliance/NTA.html

Transition Research Institute:
http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/coe/sped/tri/institute.html

National Transition Network
http://www.ici.coled.umn.edu/ntn

Academy for Educational Development:
http://www.aed.org

Council of Chief State School Officers:
http://www.ccsso.org

Additional Sites

The Library of Congress
http://www.loc.gov
This Web site will provide the latest information about the activities of the United States Congress.

U. S. Department of Education
http://www.ed.gov
This Web site provides information on a variety of programs and initiatives sponsored through the various agencies at the Department of Education. It also provides grants and contract information, newsletters and press releases, department contacts, department priorities, and links to education-related Web sites.

U. S. Department of Labor
http://www.dol.gov
This Web site provides information on the programs and activities sponsored through the Department of Labor. It also provides grants and contract information, labor-related data, media releases, and links to labor-related Web sites.

Center on Education and Work
http://www.cew.wisc.edu
The Center on Education and Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison, provides leadership in identifying and responding to issues affecting the connections among education, work, community, and the family. The focus is on initiatives in the areas of School-to-Work, Tech Prep, and Coordinated Workforce Development.

Deaf Students in Transition
http://www.gallaudet.edu/~cadsweb/transiti.html
This site has the fulltext article entitled: Deaf Students in Transition: Education and Employment Issues for Deaf Adolescents.

National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE)
http://vocserve.berkeley.edu
The Center works towards fulfilling its mission to strengthen education to prepare all individuals for lasting and rewarding employment and lifelong learning.

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)
http://www.aed.org/nichcy/index.html
NICHCY provides information on disabilities and disability-related issues, links people with others who share common concerns, publishes newsletters and issue papers, and generally helps information flow between people who have it and people who need it.

National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC)
http://www.naric.com/naric
NARIC collects and disseminates the results of federally-funded research projects with funding by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). This site provides access to the ABLEDATA and REHABDATA databases, publications, calendar of events, and other disability resources.

School-to-Work Outreach Project
http://mail.ici.coled.umn.edu/schooltowork
The School-to-Work Outreach Project, a national, three year project, is funded by the U.S. Department of Education at the University of Minnesota. The goal of this project is to improve school-to-work opportunities for students with disabilities. This web site is also used to make connections with other STW resources.

Education and Work Program
http://www.nwrel.org/edwork
This site includes information about the Education and Work Program at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. Online information includes: the Tech Prep Networker newsletter, conference information, publications, workshops, and other useful Web pages.

Regional Resource and Federal Centers Network
http://www.aed.org/special.ed/frc.html
The RRFC Network is a network of seven technical assistance agencies - six Regional Resource Centers, and one Federal Resource Center - funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The RRFC Network delivers technical assistance to state education agencies, helping them improve special education policies, programs, and practices.

School-to-Work Transition
http://www.ncrel.org/ncrel/sdrs/areas/sw0cont.htm
This site by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory provides information on various critical issues related to school-to-work transition. There are publications that include links to various reference sites and other pertinent Web sites.

The National School-to-Work Learning & Information Center provides information, assistance, and training to build School-to-Work opportunities in the United States. The Center works to build the capacity of professionals to develop and implement school-to-work systems in communities throughout the nation. This site contains current STW publications, resource and research material, media announcements, and information on STW practices across the country.

School-to-Work Internet Gateway
http://www.stw.ed.gov

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Upon request, this publication will be made available in alternative formats. Collaborators of the National Transition Alliance are equal opportunity employers and educators.

National Transition Alliance Mission

The mission of the National Transition Alliance for Youth with Disabilities is to ensure that youth with disabilities, including those with severe disabilities, acquire skills and knowledge, gain experience, and receive services and supports necessary to achieve successful post school outcomes, including postsecondary education, gainful employment, independent living, community living, social integration, and lifelong learning. The National Transition Alliance seeks the formation of one education system that benefits from the lessons learned from special education, regular education, and vocational education.

A note from the Editor

The **Alliance News** welcomes article submissions for future quarterly publications. Deadline for the September newsletter is July 15, 1996. Thanks to our contributors, this first issue brings you an overview of the NTA and highlights some of our activities. We welcome your comments, questions, feedback or requests for future articles of interest. Please send to my attention via E-mail to:
tdivita@aed.org or fax (202) 884-8443
or call (202) 884-8210
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NATIONAL TRANSITION ALLIANCE
FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

ALLIANCE

The Newsletter of the National Transition Alliance

VOLUME 1
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September, 1996

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Alliance

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Produced for the NTA by The Academy for Educational Development

Employer Partnerships in the School to Work Transition of Youth with Disabilities

"How do I build effective partnerships with employers?"

This is one of the most frequently asked questions of the National Transition Alliance and one of the most important, for without significant employer participation, school to work will fail. This article explores the critical aspects that school to work developers might consider when building and sustaining employer partnerships. Hopefully, these ideas will stimulate the development of outreach and educational activities targeted to the employer community.

Getting to Know Your Employers

No single compelling reason exists for employer involvement in transition programs. While there is no magic formula, a confluence of issues can convince an employer of the benefits of school to work. Some issues may include an employer's need for a high quality workforce, a concern with the quality and modernity of the educational system, and the repercussions of this system on the economic health of the community. Employers may seek to diversify their workforce and comply with state and federal law, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, while many others ascribe personal reasons for their participation, including experience with a family member who has a disability. Also, keep in mind that school to work is not on the radar of most employers. Therefore, it is critical to understand first, the concerns and needs of the employer community before presenting school to work. Communication is vital to tailoring a program's activities and services to the employment culture in any particular local area. It is dangerous to assume that the employer community is a monolithic group. Small and midsized firms often grapple with vastly different issues from large firms and concerns vary across industries. Constantly listening to the employer and developing a school to work initiative that responds and is sensitive to employers' needs, will go a long way. Help the employer see that you are not only asking for their participation, but that you are providing them with a service.

How to Recruit Employers

Once you understand your employer's needs, you must develop a strategy to show him or her how hiring students with disabilities will be an advantage.

Here are four approaches:

✓ Clearly Define Roles and Responsibilities

Ask yourself what role employers will play in developing and delivering worksite opportunities for young people. Keep in mind the program goals, the program scale, and the priorities of leading employers.

PARTNERSHIPS *Continued on page 3*

NATIONAL TRANSITION ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

MEMBERS

The NTA WWW address is: http://www.aed.org/Transition/Alliance/NTA.html

Transition Research Institute at Illinois, University of Illinois
113 Children's Research Center, 51 Gerty Drive, Champaign, Illinois 61820
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1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 900
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1800 Diagonal Road
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✓ Target Employers that are Most Likely to Participate

As with any marketing effort, successful employer recruitment requires getting the message right and sending it to the right audience. Differentiate among the small, midsized and large firms and firms in different industries. Also, look at their history of school-business partnerships, previous records of commitment and leadership with their community, and familiarity with work-based learning models.

✓ Approach Employers in Ways They Trust

If employers are to take their involvement in school to work to meaningful levels, they must feel ownership toward the program. Involve employers early in the partnership by giving them significant responsibility; be able to answer their concerns; use business leaders to recruit peers; and use the credibility of a business intermediary organization, like the National Alliance of Business, to assist in the recruitment.

✓ Maintain and Deepen Employer Participation

Firms that commit to one level of participation might be persuaded to extend that involvement over time, especially as they grow more comfortable and confident in their role. Involve them in ongoing, standing bodies that govern program policy; reward them for their contributions; have them speak for the program and the work-based learning at the local, state and national levels. Continually engage them.

✓ Help Employers Make the Transition

Employers need preparation, orientation and support to recruit and integrate students with disabilities into the workplace. They are concerned with the amount of paperwork and bureaucracy involved. They are also uncertain about whether individuals with disabilities can do the job. Help employers understand that Partnerships mean that youth entering to the workplace are equipped with industry based competencies. Employer's concerns become valid unless school programs begin to present youth as skilled individuals ready for the workplace. Employer validated skills must become apparent for success to occur in school to work transitions.

Employers sometimes lack the knowledge of how to accommodate for an individual's needs. They need accurate and honest information about the youth. In addition, clear information about partnership support will facilitate success. Educational jargon is enough to frighten even the hardiest of school to work advocates. Specific activities of the program should be explained to employers in simple language. Finally, any good relationship takes dedication and investment to develop. This means working through the problems and celebrating the successes!

Practical Strategies For Program Developers

Many factors influence how school to work programs build and sustain effective employer partnerships. George Tilson and his colleagues at TransCen, Inc. suggest the following six strategies:

1. View employers as customers
2. Establish mutual trust through quality interactions
3. Market your program, so that employers know about all of its activities and the services
4. Show employers specific benefits for working with your students
5. Cultivate your partnerships over time
6. Apply customer service principles to all aspects of your work— solicit feedback, quicken your response time, customize the program, provide value-added services, be more than competent; be outstanding, and make the entire program a customer service department

References

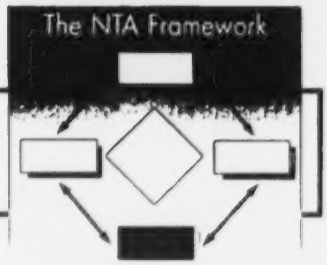
Mank, D. M. (1996). Evolving roles for employers and support personnel in the employment of people with severe disabilities. Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 6, 83-88. [Elsevier Science Ireland Ltd., Journal Information Center, 655 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10010; (212) 633-3750].

McNeil, P. W., & Kulick C. D. (1996). Employer's role in school to work opportunities. Washington DC: The Academy for Educational Development. [1875 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20009-1202; (202) 884-8183]

Tilson, G. P. (1996). Building relationships with employers by applying solid customer service principles. Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 6, 77-82. [Elsevier Science Ireland Ltd., Journal Information Center, 655 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10010; (212) 633-3750.]

Tilson, G., P., Luecking, R., Donovan, M. (1994). Involving employers in transition: The BRIDGES model. Career Development for Exceptional Individuals 17, 1, 77-89. [Division of Career Development and Transition, CEC, 1920 Association Drive, Reston VA 22091; (703) 620-3660]

Tilson, G. P., Luecking, R., West, L. L. (1996). The employer partnership in transition for youth with disabilities. The Journal of Vocational Special Needs Education, 18, 3, 88-92. [National Association of Vocational Education Special Needs Personnel, 518 E. Nebraska Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68508-0515; (402) 472-2365]



Business and Community Resources

Program Resources for School Business Partnerships

Business and Education Transition Alliance (BETA)

The Program Effectiveness Panel, (PEP), a U.S. Department of Education's primary mechanism for the validation of educational program effectiveness, judged *BETA* as a model school to work transition program. *BETA* is a school to work transition program that meets the employment needs of at-risk youth, including those with disabilities, and also the needs of employers for well-trained, entry level employees.

Phillip Stroup
Project Director
(303) 442-5040

Boulder Valley School District
6600 Arapahoe
Boulder, Colorado 80303

Many programs using best practices and state of the art partnership strategies evolve. These are a few examples of programs that have successfully included youth with disabilities in transition from school to work systems.

Bridges from School-to-Work

Develops internships with area businesses for students with disabilities in their final year of high school. *Bridges* gives students job training and work experience that enhance work potential and helps local employers gain access to another source of employees.

George P. Tilson
Project Manager
(301) 424-2002

TransCen, Inc.
451 Hungerford Drive Suite 700
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Bridges is a project of the Marriott Foundation for People with Disabilities and administered by TransCen, Inc.

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

JAN is an international network and consulting resource for accommodating persons with disabilities in the workplace. *JAN* is a joint venture with the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Call (800) JAN -7234 in the US for more information.

Youth Transition Program (YTP)

Policy makers and practitioners across the country agree that the creation of a seamless school to work system for youth requires restructuring systems, but Oregon is one of a few states that have begun restructuring on a state wide level. Oregon's Youth Transition Program is a collaborative effort among the Oregon Department of Education, Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Division, University of Oregon and public schools in local communities across the state. *YTP* currently operates in 26 sites across Oregon, helping youth with disabilities make the transition from school to work. *YTP* aims to provide a "new pattern of services" to students with disabilities by achieving two goals: enhancing the ability of students to enter competitive employment after leaving school and creating systemic change within schools and agencies serving students with disabilities.

Dr. Mike Benz
Associate Professor
(503) 346-1408

Secondary Special Education
and Transition Program
University of Oregon
175 College of Education
Eugene, Oregon 97403-5206

National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation and the National Clearinghouse on Business/Industry Involvement in Education. (NAIEC)

NAIEC, established in 1964, is a non profit membership organization that serves as the nation's principal advocate for fostering industry-education collaboration and a national clearinghouse for information and technical assistance on industry involvement in education.

NAIEC and the National Clearinghouse on Business/Industry Involvement in Education.

NAIEC and the National Clearinghouse on Business/Industry Involvement in Education
235 Hendricks Boulevard
Buffalo, New York 14226-3304
(716) 834-7047

Worksource Enterprises

Worksource Enterprises works jointly with Charlottesville, Virginia city schools, the Community Rehabilitation Program and the Private Industry Council to meld these resources and structure successful experiences for ALL students, especially students at-risk of dropping out of school. Competitive Employment Work Adjustment Training, CEWAT, based in Charlottesville High School in Virginia, was initially created to help students with disabilities find paid job placements and develop good work behaviors. CEWAT provides job coaches who work with students to help them identify job prospects, apply for employment and negotiate any difficulties that arise after they are hired. Contact Lee-Davis Brown a Vocational Planner with the Office of Career Training, (804) 296-5131 for more information.

John Santoski, M.S., CRC
Vice President,
Worksource Enterprises
(804) 972-1730;
(804) 972-7412 fax

Competitive Employment Work and Transition (CEWAT)
413 East Market Street, Suite 201
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-5252

Coordinated by Charlottesville City Public Schools

Additional Resources for School Business Partnerships

Benz, M., Lindstrom, L. & Johnson, M. (1993). Youth transition program: Procedures manual. Oregon: University of Oregon. [The University of Oregon Secondary Special Education and Transition Program, 5260 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 97403-5260; (541) 346-1407]

Poston, H.K. (1996). Work America. The business voice on workforce development. Washington, DC: National Alliance for Business. [The National Alliance for Business, 1201 New York Avenue NW, Suite 700 Washington, DC, 20005-3917; (202) 289-2972]

The ARC. The Road To Opportunity. Arlington, TX: Author. Developed by national leaders in the area of employment for people with mental retardation, the book discusses accurate information on ADA, and how it relates to employing people with mental retardation, helpful tips on finding, hiring, and training workers, and included are an abundant of useful resources. [ARC Publications, PO Box 1047, Arlington, TX, 76004; (817) 261-6003]

University of Oregon. Working Partners. (1995). Portland OR: Portland Community College. An employer's guide to working with special populations. $7.00 [1235 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 97403-1235; (541) 346-5311]

West, L. L., Luecking, R., & Tilson, G. (1996). The employer partnership in transition for youth with disabilities. The Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 18, (3), 88-91. [National Association of Vocational Education Special Needs Personnel, 518 E. Nebraska Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE, 68508-0515 (402)-472-2365]

Benefits to Employers

- Qualified and skilled workers
- Built-in effective screening mechanisms to assess the technical, work readiness, and academic skills of the students
- Diversity of the workforce
- An opportunity to cross-train current employees as the students take on some of their responsibilities—essentially creating career ladders for existing employees
- Networking with other employers in their area
- Increase company 's visibility in their community
- Direct support to employers and students plus additional resources to the employer—training, problem solving, information, community visibility, natural supports, etc.
- Financial benefits—tax incentives, subsidized wages, reimbursement for extra costs of training and supervising students to compensate for loss of productivity for skilled workers who train or mentor students

School to Work Opportunities Act
STWOA

Designing and managing the school-based learning experience:

Business and school partnerships can:

- Identify tasks and the skills needed to perform at the worksite or industry
- Donate and allow the use of high-tech equipment for student learning
- Serve as consultants to school based enterprises (student run businesses)

Work together to insure that:

- School curricula reflect the needs of the worksite
- Work-based and school-based learning are integrated
- Agreed upon skills standards are achieved by youth

Designing and managing the work-based learning activities:

Assign mentors and job coaches

Sequence worksite experience to provide:

- Opportunities to learn multiple tasks in an occupational cluster
- Exposure to all aspects of the company or industry

Designing and managing connecting activities:

- Update teachers and school administrators on skills needed in the workplace
- Coordinate with school to plan beneficial work based learning experiences
- Conduct staff development programs in highly technical areas for teachers
- Provide summer employment opportunities for teachers in technical areas so that they can bring back what they learn to their classroom
- Invite students and teacher to participate in in-house training sessions
- Adopt a school
- Initiate and expand a cooperative education program.
- Sponsor career oriented student day
- Publicly recognize high quality students, teachers and schools
- Create community climate supportive of learning job skills and continuing education.
- Provide scholarships and financial aide to student learners

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) of 1994 creates a tremendous opportunity for collaboration among schools, communities and businesses. It brings industry into the classroom. It promotes lifelong learning that begins in the school and extends into the workplace. Learners of all ages, races, cultures, and abilities have increased opportunities to pursue postsecondary education and training in preparation for high skilled, high wage careers and independent living.

School to work is designed to involve business and community resources in three main areas: school-based learning, work-based learning and connecting activities. School-based learning includes a variety of programs and services designed to help all students attain high academic and occupational standards. These programs are designed to expose students to a broad array of career opportunities. School-based learning facilitates the selection of career majors based on individual interests, preferences, strengths and abilities.

The school-based learning component includes career awareness and exploration and counseling to identify career interests and goals; selection of career major by the 11th grade; a program of study designed to meet the standards set by Goals 2000: Educate America Act; integration of academic and vocational learning and regularly scheduled student evaluations.

The work-based learning component stresses the importance of the workplace as an active learning environment in the educational process. Making comprehensive work programs available to students is one of the mandatory provisions of the Act. Employers and educators become partners in extending opportunities for all students to participate in high-quality, work-based experiences while they are still in school. The work-based learning component may include a planned program of job training or work experiences through worksite involvement by students and teachers. In addition, it includes paid work experience, workplace mentoring, and instruction in overall workplace competencies.

Connecting activities encourage the broad participation of community representatives, including employers, parents, students, community organizations, secondary and postsecondary schools, and other public and private entities. These activities coordinate the involvement to create an ongoing communication network. Connecting activities include matching students with employers, serving as liaison between the employer and school, teachers, parents and other community partners, and linking youth development activities with employer and industry strategies for upgrading employee skills.

References

Kellogg, A. (Ed.) (1995). All means all. Madison, WI: Wisconsin's Design for Transition Success. [125 South Webster, PO Box 7841, Madison, WI, 53707-7841, (608) 267-3748.]

Norman, M. E. & Bourexis, Patricia S. (1995). Including students with disabilities in school to work opportunities. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers. [One Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 700, Washington DC, 20001-1431, (202) 336-7057.]

STW: A View From The States

The NTA interviewed states that are integrating the STWOA three core components in their school to work activities. We bring you highlights from these innovative systems. It is our hope to continue to spotlight successful systemic strategies found in school to work systems across the United States. The following section discusses two states and their philosophies and strategies for including youth with disabilities in school to work opportunities.

In an interview with Bill Sugarman from the Center for Transition and Employment, the NTA learned about school to work enterprises in Vermont. Consortiums from around the state comprise people from both special and regular education. Comprehensively, this promotes an understanding of both special and regular education and wins a good beginning for collaboration. From the top down, regional partnerships pursued funding to increase regional capacity to serve all youth. This brief summary focuses on Vermont's School to Work Initiative and Consortium and its activities at the state and regional levels.

Vermont organized four lead partners to create school to work systems. They are the State Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Education, Vermont State Colleges and the Department of Employment and Training. Additionally, the state school to work system collaborates with the University of Vermont and the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. Robin Morton represents the Business Education Partnerships. She designed work-based mentoring opportunities for all youth in transition from school to work. In addition, Robin trains school support staff, employers, and lead partners in maintaining successful partnerships and creating work-based activities such as job mentoring. Examples of effective practices in school to work activities, such as mentoring, occur between Wyeth Nutritionals and the Georgia Elementary Schools. Integrated applied academic activities of Lynn Bondurant at the Smokey House Project illustrate some ongoing connecting and work-based learning activities for youth with disabilities. These activities help bridge school-based learning to real-life workplace experiences for all youth.

One goal of Vermont's state plan is to use existing programs and make generic offerings successful by making them accessible to youth with disabilities. One example is the Vermont State Teams for Children and Families. These teams encourage parent participation and actively recruit families and individuals with disabilities to participate.

Even before STWOA, Vermont improved their provision of employment support at the local and regional high school level. This ensured that youth with disabilities were included in employment and other work-based activities. In Harwood, Duxbury High school exemplifies this improvement. Often funding is the divisive factor in keeping education systems separate. Harwood has broken down funding barriers and integrated lessons learned from special and regular education. One of its goals is to make sure that all program offerings are generic and accessible for active participation of all youth.

STATE VIEWS *Continued on page 10*

Next Steps expands horizons for youth!

An example of school-based learning that occurs in a secondary education setting is an elective called "Human Relations at Work." In the classroom, students learn about how to be a good supervisor and a good employee. The "Harwood Union Next Step" employment program provides transition services for the 750 students of a local high-school in Moretown, Vermont. With help from "Next Steps" the business community is recognizing Harwood as a resource for employees. This creates broader exposure of work experiences from a variety of industries for ALL youth.

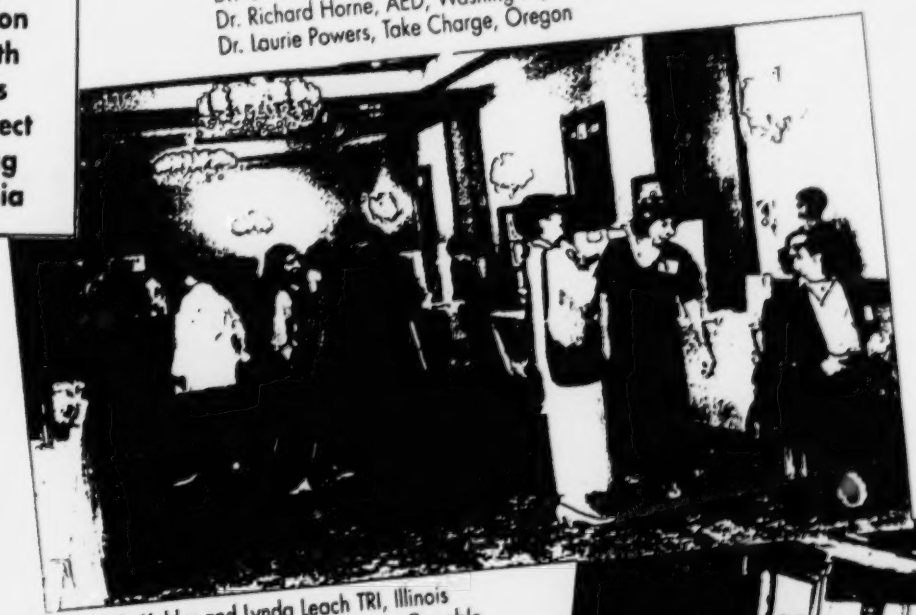
To learn more about innovative school to work transitions for all youth, especially youth with disabilities, contact: Jeanie Crosby - State School to Work Coordinator (802) 828-3326.

Next Steps
Marwood & Union Mish School
Box 790
Moretown, VT 05660
Gary Kingsburg
Co-Coordinator
(802) 244-5186

Annual Meet

June 5, 1996
Poster Session
National Transition
Alliance for Youth
with Disabilities
11th Annual Project
Directors Meeting
Arlington, Virginia

Dr. Sara Conlon, CEC, Virginia and
Dr. Carol Valdivieso, FRC, Washington, DC
Dr. Richard Horne, AED, Washington, DC and
Dr. Laurie Powers, Take Charge, Oregon



Dr. M

Dr. Paula Kohler and Lynda Leach TRI, Illinois
Stephen Hofmann, Project Coordinator: Capable,
Able and Dependable Self Determination Project,
West Contra Costa Unified School District, California

Dan Wiltrout, CCSSO, Washington DC,
Dr. Peter Joyce, NAB, Washington DC,
holding son, Henry Joyce and
Dr. Frank Rusch, TRI, Illinois

Dr. David Baggett, NTA, Consultant, California in front of the
exhibit of Careers On Line, University of Minnesota, Minnesota

Anne

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ng Snapshots

Ward OSERS, and Ivan Charner, AED

Basically, people fall into one to three categories:

Those of us who make things happen

Those of us who let things happen

and those of us who say: what the heck happened!

J.D. Hoye, 1996

Omar Martin, Niki Martin with Project Second Chance, Joseph P. Kennedy Institute, Virginia

r and Rhona Hartman, HEATH Resource Center, Washington, DC

Naturally, our participants at this Project Directors meeting are "..people who make things happen". What an incredible turnout!

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STATE VIEWS *Continued from page 7*

Colorado approaches school to work from a systemic rather than a localized programmatic view. The philosophy of including children with disabilities in neighborhood schools, regardless of the severity of a child's disability, ensures that *Colorado embraces ALL students.* The Colorado Systems Change Project for youth with disabilities uses a systemic or capacity building design that works with every community in the state. The same focus guides the Colorado School to Career initiative, developing a comprehensive approach to build an integrated systems state wide. Rather than having special populations represented in separate groups, Colorado includes representatives from diverse populations and related professionals on all working committees at every level. Thus, all populations are represented across the board from the design stage to implementation.

Transition Resource material may be ordered from the Colorado State Department of Education Career and Technical Education Resource Center
9125 East 10th Drive - Building 859
Aurora, Colorado 80010
(303) 340-7350 • (303) 340-7353

Colorado's strength in coordinating involvement of employers, schools and students ensures business involvement. Committees related to school to work issues include "seasoned" employers, those experienced in employing youth with disabilities. Whenever local grants became available, they require that the transition interagency/governing boards for youth with disabilities work as partners. Local level partnerships must make sure that programs for youth with disabilities using the same strategies; include representation from diverse populations on integrated work groups.

In its last year of a five-year grant, Colorado is reframing its system change initiative for youth with disabilities toward alignment with school to work. This ensures that best practices and key personnel are used and integrated within the system. Colorado makes up teams of very powerful players: key people must be involved in the partnership from the beginning.

For specific program information, please contact Susan McAlonan with the Colorado Department of Education, 201 East Colfax Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80203; (303) 866-6715.

The NTA extends a special thanks to those who graciously responded to our request in such detail and within a short time. Without your patience and influence this spotlight would not have been possible. Look for future spotlights from Iowa, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, and Kentucky in upcoming issues of the Alliance.

Thank you: Susan McAlonan, Colorado; Bill Sugarman, Vermont; Phyllis Garnett, New Jersey; Meredith Flynn, Gloucester County, New Jersey; Bob Zentmeyer, Eagle Enterprises, New Jersey; Roberta Ginavan, Iowa, Shirley Pantini, Lin-Mar School District, Iowa; Donna Swim, Anita Community School District, Iowa; Lucy Choisser, Grant-Wood Education Agency, Iowa.

Select Projects about Student-Focused Planning and Development

"Success in transition only occurs if someone at school takes a special interest in a youngster"
Dr. Laurie Powers, June 1996.

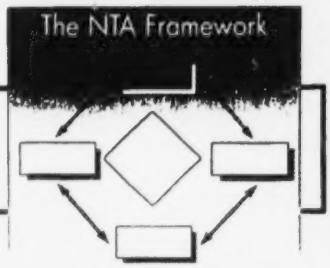
Dr. Laurie Powers, Associate Professor, Psychology, UAP-Child Development and Rehabilitation Center
Oregon Health Sciences University, P.O. Box 574; Portland, OR 97202
Take Charge Transition Planning Project, Hood Center for Family Support, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center
One Medical Center Drive, Lebanon, NH 03756, (603) 650-4419

Best Practices: A Study to Understand and Support Student Participation in Transition Planning
Dr. Deanna Sands, University of Colorado at Denver, Campus Box 106, PO Box 177364
Denver, Colorado 80217-3364, (303) 556-8449

Choice-Maker Self-Determination Project, School of Education, Special Education Programs
Dr. James Martin and Laura Huber Marshall, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
P.O. Box 7150, Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7150, (719) 593-3272

Transition to Independence (TIP), Jamie Shuler, Project Coordinator, Spina Bifida Association of Kentucky
982 Eastern Parkway, Box 18, Louisville, KY 40217, (502) 637-7363

Student-Focused Planning and Development



In the last issue of the Alliance, we introduced the NTA Framework. This framework emerged from more than ten years of research conducted by the Transition Research Institute at Illinois (TRI). Its purpose facilitates the planning, development, and evaluation of school to work systems that address the needs of all students, particularly youth with disabilities. The framework features five broad categories of practices, as shown in this diagram. These include **Structures and Policies**, **Student-Focused Planning and Development, Career Pathways and Contextual Learning, Family Involvement, and Business and Community Resources**. Collaboration in all of its varied forms, serves as an important connection among the categories. This article highlights practices reflected in **Student-Focused Planning and Development** and its contribution to effective school to work programs.

During their secondary education experience, all youth need to gain knowledge, skills, and experiences that enable them to live and work as independently as possible in their adult lives. Across the nation, state and local governments are seeking to identify effective practices as they develop and implement school to work systems for all students. Research on effective transition practices for youth with disabilities can provide a great deal of substance with which to build these programs.

The framework, developed for the NTA, recognizes student-focused planning and development as one component of effective school to work programs. Student-focused planning and development include elements that focus on planning and developing educational programs for individual students. By examining effective transition programs for youth with disabilities, TRI has distinguished six elements reflected in student-focused planning and development: *Life Skills Instruction, Individual Education and Career Plan Development, Student Participation, Planning Strategies, Assessment,* and *Support Services.*

Life Skills Instruction includes activities in leisure skills and social skills training, self-determination and self advocacy training. Students must develop strong skills in these areas to communicate their personal interests and strengths when confronted with further education or employment opportunities. Self determination, one principle affecting success for students is defined by Ward (1988) as "the attitudes which lead people to define goals for themselves and the ability to take the initiative to achieve those goals".

Individual Education and Career Plan Development identifies measurable goals and objectives for each area of consideration: postsecondary education, vocation and community related objectives, residential and recreational and leisure goals. Attainment of goals is reviewed annually. To ensure that effective student-focused planning occurs, *Student Participation* is a critical component. It shifts the focus to a student driven process with documentation of students interests and preferences. Career counseling services provided to the student encourage full participation. Self-determination facilitated within the planning process paves the way for full student participation.

In *Planning Strategies*, a team including the student, family members, school and participating agency personnel, and a planning team leader, must be identified. Accommodations of the student's communication needs are considered during the planning stage. Additionally, a meeting time and place conducive to student and family participation are arranged.

An authentic *Assessment* method evaluating vocational, academic, cognitive, and adaptive behavior is an integral part of student-focused planning and development. Finally *Support Services* must be in place to identify and develop environmental adaptations, accommodations, and natural support systems. Any assistive technology devices, or additional related services would be added during this stage of planning.

Individualized planning is the key to effectively match a student's educational program and school experiences to his or her post-school goals. Student participation in this process is essential, and self-determination skills are fundamental. A resource section created at the end of this article details further information regarding self-determination skills and student-focused planning and development.

Student-Focused Planning and Development References *continued on page 12*

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Editorial Advisory Committee

Meet the members of the NTA's Editorial Advisory Committee (EAC). The EAC encourages your opinion and welcomes comments and requests for articles of interest. Please let us know what you would like to see in future issues. If you would like to contribute articles or resources, please contact the editor, Therese Divita at (202) 884-8210 or send an e-mail to tdivita@aed.org, or fax to (202) 884-8443. Thanks to the EAC for their support in helping us gather state-of-the-art resources and information about transitioning youth with disabilities.

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Select Conferences

U.S. Department of Education
1996 Regional Conferences on
Improving America's Schools
"Working Together: All Children, High Standards"
September 24-26, 1996
St. Louis, Missouri
(800) 522-0772 x 2248

Watch for a "Call for Papers" for this 1997 Conference
Council for Exceptional Children
Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT)

1997 International Conference
October 16-18, 1997
Division Double Tree
Paradise Valley Resort
Scottsdale, Arizona
Laura Love
(602) 542-2805

National Alliance for Business (NAB)
Annual Workforce Conference
October 5-8, 1996
Los Angeles, California
(800) 787-2881

Chief Council State
School Officers (CCSSO)
State Urban Initiative
on School-to-Careers
"Shared Cost Consortium
Conference on Standards
Serving All Students and Evaluation"
October 10-12, 1996
San Diego, California
(202) 336-7057

Council on Exceptional Children (CEC)
Division on Mental Retardation and
Developmental Disabilities
International Conference (5th)
"Goals 2000: Education in a New Century"
October 11-13, 1996
Marriott at the Capitol
Austin, Texas
Linda Easton, University of Northern Colorado
(313) 944-9500

U.S. Department of Education
1996 Regional Conferences on
Improving America's Schools
"Working Together: All Children, High Standards"
October 20-22, 1996
San Francisco, California
(800) 522-0772 x 2248

Council for Exceptional Children Division on
Career Development and Transition (DCDT)
Midwestern Regional Conference
October 24-26, 1996
Bloomington, Minnesota
Stephanie Corbey, (612) 425-4131

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
(NWREL)
Education and Work Program
"Work Now and in the Future 13 Conference"
November 4-5, 1996
Oregon Convention Center
Portland, Oregon
(800) 547-6339 x598

47th Annual Convention of the The Arc
November 14-16, 1997
Louisville, Kentucky
(817) 261-6003 or call your local chapter

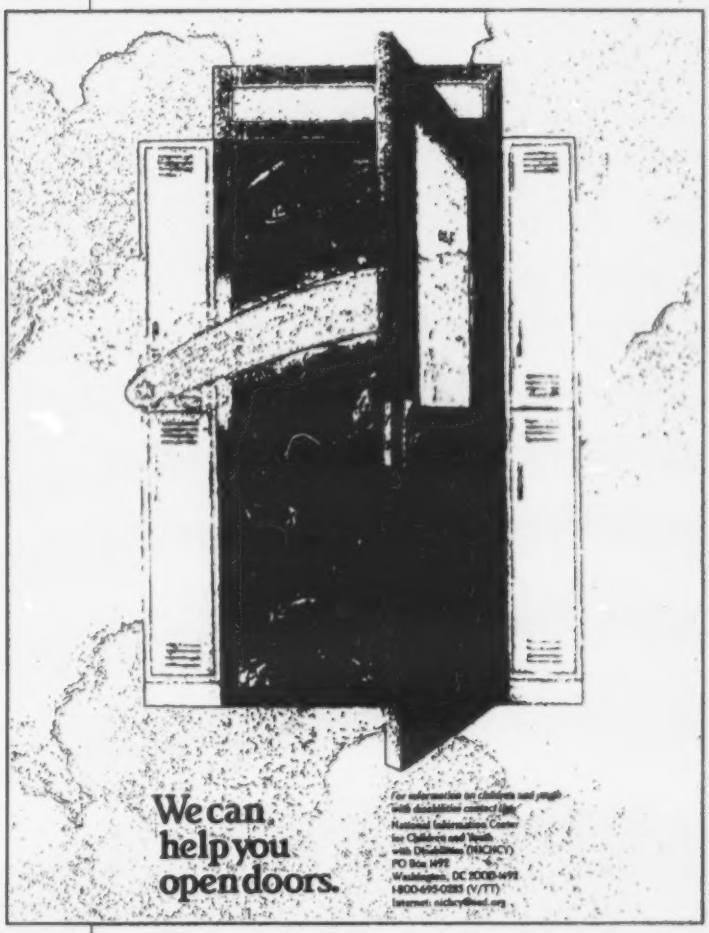
Safe Schools Coalition, Inc.
Second Joint Conference
"Transition from School to Work"
November 14-16, 1996
Orlando, Florida
LaMar Haynes, J.D., National Education Association
(800) 537-4903

National Association of State Directors
of Special Education (NASDSE)
59th NASDSE Annual Meeting
"Accountability in a World Class Education
System for Individuals with Disabilities"
November 17-20, 1996
Royal Sonesta Hotel
306 Bourbon Street
New Orleans, Louisiana
(504) 586-0300
Joan Nelson, (703) 519-3800

The Association for Persons
with Severe Handicaps (TASH)
"Renewing the Promise"
November 20-23, 1996
New Orleans Hilton Riverside
New Orleans, Louisiana
(504) 531-0500
Denise Marshall, (410) 828-8274 x103

U.S. Department of Education
1996 Regional Conferences on Improving
America's Schools
"Working Together: All Children, High Standards"
November 20-22, 1996
Atlanta, Georgia
(800) 522-0772 x 2248

Partnerships for Success, Annual Convention
of the American Vocational Association
December 5-8, 1996
AVA Advance Registration
1410 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia
(800) 826-9972
(703) 683-1409 TDD



Look Who's New on the Web

Council for Exceptional Children: http://www.cec.sped.org/home.htm

DCDT

Division on Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals (DCDT) http://www.kumc.edu/dcdt/

Future Issues of the Alliance will cover

School to Work topics including:

- School to Work Evaluations, Student Assessments Strategies
- Skills Standards
- Integrating Educational Reform Policies
- Legal Remedies
- Social Marketing
- Collaboration
- Monitoring
- Technology
- Students with Severe Disabilities
- Reform
- Funding

Continuing Highlights from NTA Framework

- Career Pathways and Contextual Learning
- Family Involvement

Watch for our announcement about the 12th Annual Project Director's Meeting coming this Spring, 1997 and the NTA Forum, planned for the Fall, 1997.

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Upon request, this publication will be made available in alternative formats. Collaborators of the National Transition Alliance are equal opportunity employers and educators.

National Transition Alliance Mission

The mission of the National Transition Alliance for Youth with Disabilities is to ensure that youth with disabilities, including those with severe disabilities, acquire skills and knowledge, gain experience, and receive services and supports necessary to achieve successful post school outcomes, including postsecondary education, gainful employment, independent living, community living, social integration, and lifelong learning. The National Transition Alliance seeks the formation of one education system that benefits from the lessons learned from special education, regular education, and vocational education.

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The *Alliance* welcomes article submissions for future quarterly publications. Deadline for the December issue is October 15, 1996. Please send information, comments, questions or requests to the editor's attention via e-mail or fax:
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Please call (202) 884-8210 if you wish to speak to Therese Divita, Writer/Editor.

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